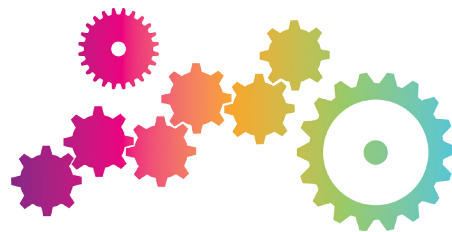




Hampshire Workplace Wellbeing Charter





Hello and welcome to the Hampshire Workplace Wellbeing Charter

We know that work and health are positively linked and that a healthy workforce is vital for an organisation to be successful. Being in work brings significant physical and mental health benefits for individuals and the quality of work and the working environment are major determinants of health inequalities.

Many of us spend much of our time at work. The workplace provides a real opportunity to protect and improve the health and wellbeing of staff and to positively influence health behaviours.

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter allows organisations to demonstrate on-going commitment to the health and wellbeing of their employees in a very practical way. It encourages them to put in place simple measures that will support staff to remain healthy, allow more people with health conditions to remain in work and enable others to return to good health so that they can return to work and continue to make a valued contribution to the work of their colleagues and the organisation.

The potential rewards for businesses are increased productivity, decreased sickness absence and accident rates with a reduction in the associated costs.

I strongly support this initiative to encourage employers in Hampshire to sign up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter. I am delighted that some organisations have come forward to sign up to the charter and are already working to improve the health and welfare of their staff and would urge others to join them.



Dr Ruth Milton
Director of Public Health for Hampshire

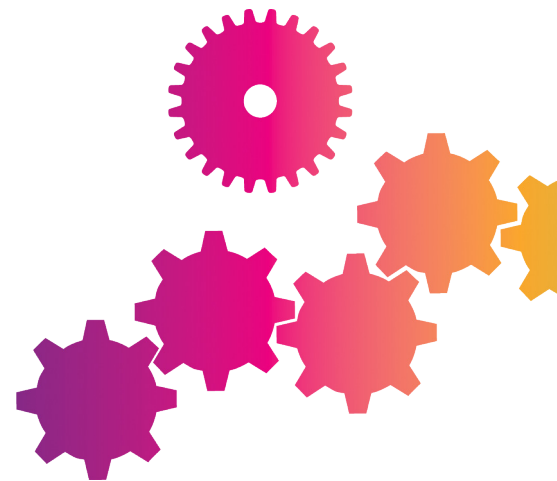
Whether our organisations, public or private, large or small, do well depends on the people who make up the workforce and how they flourish.

The real commitment of employers to supporting the health and wellbeing of each employee is now recognised as a key role in performance – of productivity and of the quality of what the organisation aims to do.

Such commitment is displayed not only when people are well, but also when they are not, whether they are dealing with long-term health problems while maintaining a normal working life, or when they are absent because of illness or injury.

This commitment goes hand-in-hand with strong staff engagement – less common than it should be – but key to improving staff and organisational performance.

The Wellbeing Charter shows organisations the way to excellence in supporting their staff, to being an exemplary employer with a reputation that is well-earned and secure. I am delighted that Hampshire is keen to further this aim across the business and service communities.



Dame Carol Black

Expert Medical Adviser on health and work to the Department of Health;
Chair, Responsibility Deal health at work network
National Director for Health and Work

About the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and how it works

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter is a statement of intent, showing your commitment to the health of the people who work for you. Several Hampshire local authorities have already adopted it to support and reward local businesses that value employee health and wellbeing.

It is relevant to all businesses, no matter how big or small you are, as long as you employ staff and can take at least the minimum steps necessary to comply with the standards.

The Charter provides a clear set of wellbeing standards, covering physical and mental health, health promotion, and ways to evaluate the services and information you are offering. It also aims to share best practice about health and wellbeing in the workplace.

The Charter focuses on three key areas - leadership, culture and communication – all areas where even small steps can make a big difference to the health of your staff and of your organisation.

The Workplace Wellbeing Charter comes in three levels, each containing different standards to achieve. Some, or all, will be relevant to you, depending on the size and direction of your organisation.

The three levels are:



You can progress through them by achieving the necessary standards.

Each of the three levels will consider issues such as leadership, sickness and absence management, awareness of alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, mental health and stress, healthy eating and physical activity.



The benefits of taking part in the Workplace Wellbeing Charter

The Charter helps employers make Health and Wellbeing their business.

Although it is about much more than reducing sickness and absenteeism, the statistics reflect how important the health of the workforce is to the economy. Nationally, the annual cost of sickness and worklessness is more than £100bn. In the county of Hampshire alone, it amounts to approximately £4 million.

Simple steps can vastly reduce the way sickness and absenteeism affects your organisation. They can also help you retain staff; attract better candidates; and maintain the health of your workforce as they grow older – a key concern in an ageing population, where almost 50% of the population is predicted to be 50-plus by 2024.

By addressing issues such as the working environment, work-life balance, healthy living and good communication, you can improve the wellbeing of your workforce. In return, you will see a culture where individual skills flourish, productivity increases, loyalty is strong and absenteeism reduces.

A healthier workforce makes for a healthier bottom line. As well as making good commercial sense, investing in the health and wellbeing of staff is seen by many as part of your responsibilities as an employer.

There is a growing body of evidence to back up the claim that improving health and wellbeing makes good business sense. As an example, British Gas held back care workshops, which led to a reduction of 43% in back-related absence and a 58% improvement in staff attendance. The return on their investment was £31 for every £1 spent.

Parcelforce Worldwide established a comprehensive workplace wellbeing programme, which cut sickness absence by a third, saving £55m. Compensation claims were reduced by two thirds, and productivity increased by 12.5%. An overall £2.25m investment resulted in direct cost savings of £6m.

Employee wellbeing doesn't just relate to large businesses – the Workplace Wellbeing Charter is just as relevant to small and medium sized enterprises, where savings might be even more important.

Locally, Sentinel Housing Association organised a programme of employee wellbeing across the organisation. Sentinel consulted with staff to find out what programmes and initiatives they would value the most and developed an annual wellbeing programme. Monthly-themed programmes kept wellbeing alive and fresh. Sentinel's programme resulted in increased levels of wellbeing and self-esteem, a reduction in sickness absence, employees eating more healthily at lunchtimes and taking up more physical activities. Sentinel also found that some staff lost up to 10% of body weight and quit smoking.

What's involved and what to do next

First of all, read the information on the Workplace Wellbeing Hampshire website, www.workplacewellbeinghampshire.org so you are familiar with the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and its different levels, then decide what level of Charter status you'd like to apply for.

You must be able to show that you meet the standards. This evidence will take a variety of forms – from written policies to staff surveys to physical evidence, such as equipment or the premises.

You could also conduct staff surveys to show the scale of the wellbeing activities in your organisation. In addition, you could provide testimonials, certificates of training or web/intranet pages. This evidence, depending on what it is, can be electronic or paper-based but must provide evidence to the assessors.

You must then submit an application form, which an officer from your local authority will review and then follow up with a site visit to verify your evidence. If there is any shortfall, we will discuss that with you and look at ways you can address it.

Once your local authority representative feels that your submission is complete, an assessment panel will review it and decide if you have achieved the criteria for Charter status.

Your Charter Award will be valid for two years, after which re-assessment will be necessary, but you can also use this time to develop your Health and Wellbeing programme, and even look at moving on to the next stage of accreditation.

The requirements and actions will vary, depending on the level you are applying for, and the size and nature of your organisation. Our assessors are always willing to talk through the process with you, and offer guidance throughout the whole process. If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

If you have Charter status, you will be able to use the relevant Charter logo on your website and printed materials. You will also be presented with a Charter certificate confirming your status.



COMMITMENT

This level demonstrates a real commitment by small organisations.



ACHIEVEMENT

This is a good achievement for medium-sized businesses.



EXCELLENT

Large organisations should strive for this level.

Process Flow

